



Moshe Telem
Translation:
Dena Matmon

He Gave Them A Stage

I met **Yoav Ashriel** for the first time 60 years ago at his folk dance session at the Ahad Ha'Am School in Tel Aviv. A friend of mine, from the moshav where I live, suggested that I join him, as I was just recovering from being wounded in the army and he thought this would be a good means of rehabilitation.

Yoav immediately saw my difficulties moving my legs and encouraged me to continue coming to dance. I agreed and I must say that because of him and his friendly approach to me, my rehabilitation went much faster.

Two years later, he invited me to join his dance troupe and a while after that he asked me to join the course he led for dance instructors.

Actually, we became the best of friends. The friendship wasn't only between the two of us, but included my late parents and later on, with my wife **Bracha**. **Yoav** and his wife **Mira** z"l, often visited with my parents at their farm and it became a family gathering.

Yoav was the first instructor to organize hishtalmuyot (folk dance workshops for instructors). He knew how to choose from among the dances that had been choreographed at the time, those



that had the characteristics of Israeli folklore. No more than eight dances were taught at each hishtalmut – workshop for instructors (which, unfortunately, is no longer the case).

The first dance that **Yoav** choreographed was "Ta'am Haman", which was widely acclaimed and is still danced today. Personally, I think that "Erev Ba", which Yoav also choreographed, is a real Israeli folk dance that is danced all over the world and is one of the best in the Israeli dance repertoire.

Yoav helped many young instructors become part of the world of instructors and choreographers. He gave them a stage at the hishtalmuyot that he organized. Among those he mentored was the wonderful and creative **Shlomo Maman**.

Over the years, **Yoav and Mira** greatly contributed to the development of the Israeli folk dance movement. Thanks to them a new generation of instructors, choreographers and dancers arose. Thanks to **Yoav** for his contributions to the world of Israeli folk dance. 



Pa'amei Machol in Heichal HaTarbut, 1968